

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A process for the combustion of volatile organic compounds comprising including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds with oxidation catalysts comprising mixed oxides of copper, manganese and one or more rare-earth metals, wherein the metals can assume multiple valence states, having a percentage composition by weight, of 35-40% CuO, 50-60% MnO and 10-15% La₂O₃.

14. (Currently Amended) The process method of claim 13 comprising including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds in a gaseous effluent.

15. (Currently Amended) The process method of claim 13 comprising including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds in a gaseous effluent from chemical or printing industries.

16. (Currently Amended) The process method of claim 13 comprising including the step of contacting the volatile organic compounds present in gaseous effluents of reactors for a the solid state polycondensation of aromatic polyester resins.

17. (Currently Amended) The process method of claim 16 comprising including the step of supplying a stoichiometric stuchiometric amount of oxygen for the combustion of the volatile organic compounds to carbon dioxide and water.

18. (Currently Amended) A process for of the combustion of hydrocarbons in the burner of thermal power stations for generating electricity comprising including the step of contacting the hydrocarbons with oxidation catalysts comprising mixed oxides of copper, manganese and one or more rare-earth metals, wherein the metals can assume multiple valence states, having a percentage composition by weight, expressed as of 35-40% CuO, 50-60% MnO and 10-15% La₂O₃.are-earth oxides (in which the metal has the lowest valence) of, respectively, 8-50%, 10-75% and 2-15%.